

VASA SACRA: APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY AND EPISCOPAL PRESTIGE IN THE ELEVENTH-CENTURY BARI BENEDICTIONAL

PENELOPE C. MAYO

The practice of excerpting texts from liturgical books and transcribing them on long, vertical rolls is a well-known feature of medieval manuscript production in southern Italy. Generically referred to as "*Exultet* rolls," thirty-three such manuscripts, dating from the tenth to the fourteenth century, survive today.¹ Only two centers, Benevento in the tenth century and Bari in the eleventh, employed the rotulus format for texts other than the *Exultet* hymn; Benevento issued a Pontifical and a *Benedictio Fontis*, while Bari executed a single roll containing the baptismal liturgy.² In the latter case, which forms the subject of this paper, three fundamental problems which concern the entire group of manuscripts are involved. These include the viability of the rotulus format in a liturgical context, the perception of these rolls as a rather endearing medieval experiment with *cinéma vérité*, and the entrenched, if hotly debated, assumption that the copious illustrations of these rolls provide a convenient reservoir from which proof of Byzantine influence on the West can be readily retrieved. The following remarks may clarify the first two of these problems; regarding the issue of Byzantine influence, a few more shadows

may be cast on waters already sufficiently murky.

Even accepting the loss of many medieval manuscripts, it is highly improbable that other Benedictinal or Pontifical rolls were ever produced. As illustrated numerous times within the manuscripts, the deacon who chants the *Exultet* hymn at the lighting of the paschal candle on Holy Saturday Eve is stationary in the ambo; the lectern provides support for the roll, and the height of the ambo permits the unfurling of a vertical roll with minimal effort and risk of physical damage to the manuscript.³ Conversely, in rotulus format, a *Benedictio Fontis* cannot be so easily managed in a ceremony where the clergy directs from the floor, and the expense account for medieval manuscripts did not envision the prospect of having their products drag on well-trod pavements or subjected to spatters of water. The Casanatense *Benedictio Fontis* from Benevento reveals how awkward a roll can be under such circumstances. In the illustration of the immersion of the candle in the font (Fig. 1), which occurs toward the end of the roll, the deacon behind the bishop has to use both hands as he simultaneously unrolls and rerolls the manuscript in an effort to keep it off the floor. The earliest of all liturgical rolls preserved, the Casanatense Pontifical from Benevento, provides an excellent example of the conundrum of the revival of the rotulus format. While a prestige operation on the part of the bishop, the ordination of multiple ranks of clerics and conferral of several different titles and ceremonial objects demand an acute synchronization of all participants. The use of a vertical roll is simply not conducive to the atmosphere

¹For the most recent bibliography on the rolls, R. Zuccaro in E. Bertaux, *L'art dans l'Italie méridionale: Aggiornamento dell'opera*, ed. A. Prandi (Rome, 1978), IV, 423–66.

²Benevento: Rome, Bibl. Casanatense, Cod. 724 (B I 13) I (Pontifical); Rome, Bibl. Casanatense, Cod. 724 (B I 13) II (*Benedictio Fontis*); Bari, Cathedral Archives (Benedictional). The numbering system in M. Avery, *The Exultet Rolls of South Italy* (Princeton, 1936) is used here and references to illustrations are to pls. CIV–CXVII for Benevento and XII–XVI for Bari. On the three rolls executed for Landolf I (957–982) of Benevento, see H. Belting, *Studien zur Beneventanischen Malerei* (Wiesbaden, 1968), 144–83, with further literature. For the Bari rolls, G. Cavallo, *Rotuli di Exultet dell'Italia meridionale* (Bari, 1973).

³Representative examples in Avery, *Exultet Rolls*, pls. XXIX, XXXIV, XLI, XLVI, LVI, CXXXIII, CXXXVIII, CLXXII.

of dignity that its presence would seem to enhance and symptomatically, on the single occasion where the bishop dictates from the roll (Fig. 2), he both holds and reads from it as if, like ancient rotuli, the manuscript had been written horizontally.⁴

The notion of cinematographic display of the illustrations of these rolls which has arisen in connection with their frequent, and apparently idiosyncratic, system of inverting text and image is also open to question. Neither of the two manuscripts just cited follows this system, and had they done so, the results would have been ludicrous. The bishop in the *Benedictio Fontis* refers to discrete sections of it during the ceremonies, rather like a modern altar-card, and inverted images, even for attending clerics and godparents, would have been, so to speak, counterproductive. The same is true of the Pontifical which was directed to the eyes only of the officiating cleric. The theatrical potential of the true *Exultet* roll is equally problematic. The long, basilican plan of western churches insures very poor visibility of images displayed from the sanctuary, and for most of the congregation inverted images would have been little more than coloristic blurs.⁵ With one possible exception, early *Exultet* rolls are not inverted, and although after the middle of the eleventh century, the inversion system gained popularity, internal evidence throughout the species indicates that many artists were aware of the hazards of the practice.⁶ In Bari, however, unlike their Beneventan predecessors, the designers of all three rolls executed there, including the less tractable Benedictional, relent-

lessly pursued the inverted format.⁷ Moreover, in Bari alone we encounter a profound sensitivity to the issue of real visibility of the inverted image, and the procedure that the designers invented for their rolls should be regarded as a kind of litmus test for the frustrated moviemakers who lurk in the ranks of art historians of the Middle Ages.

The Bari Benedictional dates to the mid-eleventh century and manifestly was conceived as a companion piece to the earlier Cathedral *Exultet* (Bari 1). In fact, the relationship between the two manuscripts is so close that F. Nitti di Vito published the Benedictional as the "secundo pezzo" of the *Exultet* roll, an observation to which we shall return shortly.⁸ At present, a comparison of the only two extant Benedictionals in rotulus format offers insights into the process of design-modification on the part of the Bari artists.

The Casanatense Benedictional is densely illustrated with fourteen scenes inserted into its text at regular and textually significant intervals.⁹ In contrast, the pictorial cycle of the Bari Benedictional is drastically reduced. Only four compositions appear, and the third and fourth—the consecration of the font and the huge Christ of the *Vere dignum* initial—have been merged into a single, iconographically meaningful image (Fig. 4). Comparative measurements of the manuscripts are also a telling factor. The Casanatense roll measures 27 × 488.1 cm and originally was much longer.¹⁰ The well-preserved Bari roll is unusually wide and short: 41.5 × 312.2 cm. The dimensions of the latter make it possible for a single person to hold the entire roll unfurled, suspended above floor level, and under certain conditions the entire text of the baptismal liturgy can be read as the illustrations are viewed by those clustered about the baptismal font.

Many years ago, Avery dismissed the Bari consecration scene with a single statement: "The scene is misplaced, the words illustrated coming later in the text."¹¹ Avery was referring to the second epi-

⁴In general, K. Weitzmann, *Ancient Book Illumination* (Cambridge, Mass., 1959); on the inadequacy of the text for the full ceremonies, M. Avery, "The Relation of the Casanatense Pontifical to the 10th Century Changes in the Ordination Rites at Rome," in *Miscell. G. Mercati*, VI (= ST 126) (Vatican City, 1946), 258–71.

⁵Poor visibility does not, of course, detract from the magical powers of display, and the later repainting of many *Exultet* rolls with red and gold enhances the "glitter factor." For the small images in the Jerusalem roll, A. Grabar, "Un rouleau liturgique constantinopolitain et ses peintures," *DOP* 8 (1954), 161–99.

⁶For a possible early date of Gaeta 1, V. Pace in *Civiltà del manoscritto a Gaeta: Exultet e Corali dal X al XVII secolo* (Gaeta, 1982), 8–26. Three rolls have extended cycles of prefatory scenes (Bari 2, Pisa 2, Troia 3) which may have served as stationary illustrations. Troia 3, not inverted, of the later 12th century, shows a cleric before the ambo rerolling the manuscript (Avery, *Exultet Rolls*, pl. CLXXXIII, 2); A. Carucci, *Il rotolo salernitano dell'Exultet* (Salerno, 1971), 58, suggests that a missal provided the text for the exceptionally long 13th-century roll. For the probable abbreviation of the pictorial cycle of Vat. lat. 3784, produced at Monte Cassino under Desiderius, P. Mayo, "Art Historical Introduction to the Codex Benedictus," in *The Codex Benedictus. Vat. lat. 1202. An Eleventh-Century Lectionary from Monte Cassino*, ed. P. Meyvaert (New York, 1983), 55 note 89.

⁷All references to illustrations of the first Bari *Exultet* are to Avery, *Exultet Rolls*, pls. IV–XI; for color facsimile, Cavallo, *Rotuli*, pls. 1–11.

⁸*Codice Diplomatico Barese. I. Le pergamene del Duomo di Bari, 952–1264*, ed. G. B. Nitto de Rossi and F. Nitti di Vito (Bari, 1897) (hereafter *CDB*), 208.

⁹Avery, *Exultet Rolls*, 3, counts sixteen scenes in the Beneventan cycle as she includes the large *O(mnipotens)* initial and the section of elaborated verses.

¹⁰Belting, *Malerei*, 153. The top of the roll has also been cut down.

¹¹Avery, *Exultet Rolls*, 14. Avery does not mention any other "misplaced scenes."

clis, the prayer that invokes the presence of God through the Holy Spirit to sanctify the waters, which does occur forty-five lines later in the text, practically at the end of the roll.¹² She seems, however, to have missed the point intended by the designers of the roll. The “misplaced” scene was not an error but a deliberate tactic which was suggested, as will become clear later in this discussion, by a facet of the design of the Cathedral *Exultet*. It is perhaps more surprising that the illustrators of the same epiclesis in the Casanatense Benedictional (Fig. 1) rejected the depiction of the Holy Spirit although the text held by the deacon reads: “Descendat in hanc plenitudine(m fontis).”¹³

More important for this investigation is that in the Bari roll the five possible illustrations of activity about the font, which are suggested by the text and represented in the Casanatense manuscript, were compressed into a single scene which terminates the abbreviated pictorial cycle. This fact fulfills one part of the condition for viewer visibility. The second part, which relates to reader capability, is provided for in the text.

Unfortunately, although it is common in studies of the liturgical rolls of southern Italy to cite both variants of the *Exultet* text, that of the *Benedictio Fontis* is simply described as that of the Roman Missal.¹⁴ The full text of the Casanatense manuscript has never been published; for that of Bari we must rely on Nitti di Vito’s occasionally flawed transcription.¹⁵

An analysis of the two texts cannot be included in the space available here, but one essential distinction between the two manuscripts must be acknowledged. The Casanatense manuscript is a true *Benedictio Fontis* and begins with the preface of the rite: “Omnipotens sempiterne Deus, adesto magnae pietatis tuae mysteriis. . . .”¹⁶ Thus, the function of the roll was confined to the baptism from the outset. The text of the Bari roll, however,

begins with two completely different prayers. The first is that recited at the benediction of the new fire struck from flint: “Deus qui per filium tuum angularum scilicet lapidem . . .”; the second honors the new light: “Dominus Deus, Pater omnipotens, exaudi nos. . . .” As these prayers occur after the reading of the eleventh prophecy ((Dan. 3:1–24) and precede the *Exultet* chant, Nitti di Vito’s description of the roll as the “secundo pezzo” of the *Exultet* is not that far off the mark.¹⁷ Moreover, these texts account for the representation of the Deesis at the beginning of the roll (Fig. 3) which appears in a wholly devotional context and was reserved in a discreet ceremony for the clergy outside of the church.¹⁸

After the *Exultet* hymn and reading of the twelfth prophecy, the Benedictional was taken up again. Directly above the illustration of the procession (Fig. 3), the antiphon, *Omnes sitientes*, which derives from the twelfth prophecy, is written in very small miniscule. As all the participants in the procession certainly knew the short verse by heart, it is unlikely that the roll had a real function at this time. Once assembled in the baptistry, the roll could have been properly unfurled; the litanies were recited, but from a book rather than the roll, as the abbreviated text suggests, and the *Sicut cervus* tract of the twelfth prophecy was repeated. The presbyter gave the general baptismal prayer, an extension of the *Sicut cervus* tract, and finally, two deacons chanted the dismissals. It is only at this point, in the text that precedes the consecration illustration, that the opening prayer of the baptismal rite, which corresponds to that at the beginning of the Casanatense roll, occurs. It occupies only six lines followed by three lines of standard responses. This places the entire pictorial cycle on

¹²“Descendat in hanc plenitudine fontis virtus spiritus tui. . . .”

¹³The Dove of the Holy Spirit appears in the Casanatense roll after the *Vere dignum* in connection with the reference to Gen. 1:2: “Deus cuius spiritus super aquas inter ipsa mundi primordia ferebatur.”

¹⁴Avery, *Exultet Rolls*, 28; Belting, *Malerei*, 154; Cavallo, *Rotuli*, 81. The distinction in attitude toward the texts occurs as early as E. Langlois, “Le rouleau d’*Exultet* de la bibl. Casanatense,” *Mémoires* (1886), 466–482, who published all three rolls but gave only the text of the *Exultet*.

¹⁵*CDB*, 208–11. As Avery and Cavallo reproduce the entire Bari roll, the case is not as critical as that of the Casanatense roll, only partly reproduced.

¹⁶H. Scheidt, *Die Taufwasserweihegebete* (Münster, 1935), 57.

¹⁷For the differences between the Roman and Beneventan Easter Vigil rites, R. J. Hesbert, “La tradition beneventaine dans la tradition manuscrite,” in *Paléographie musicale*, XIV (Tournai, 1936), 60–465; idem, “L’Antiphonale Missarum de l’ancien rit beneventaine (Continuatio),” *EphL* 61 (1947), 153–210 and esp. 184 ff. For the ordo in the early 11th-century Missal in the Episcopal Archives in Benevento, Cod. VI 33, J. Hourlier, “Le Missel de Benevent VI–33,” in *Paléographie musicale*, XV (Bern-Frankfurt, 1983), fols. 78–83 and the abbreviated edition by S. Rehle, “Missale Beneventanum (Codex VI 33) des Erzbischoflichen Archivs von Benevent,” *Sacris Erudiri* 21 (1972–73), 323–405 and esp. 359.

¹⁸The “primicerius” Silvester who kneels at Christ’s feet has so far resisted identification. For the nuclear meaning of the Deesis, C. Walter, “Two Notes on the Deësis,” *REB* 26 (1968), 311–36; idem, “Further Notes on the Deësis,” *REB* 28 (1970), 161–87. On the benediction of the new fire, A. Franz, *Die kirchlichen Benediktionen im Mittelalter* (Freiburg im Breisgau, 1909), I, 507–18.

view prior to the body of rubrics and texts vital to the clergy for the ceremony.

The illustrations of these pre-consecration and baptismal texts must have served more than a single function. The Deesis, for example, visually reinforces the litany which in the roll names only Christ, the Virgin, archangels, and St. John the Baptist. The Procession perpetuates the reminders of Exodus which resonate throughout the Easter Vigil.¹⁹ It is the Consecration of the Font, however, that presents the highest degree of conflation of liturgical ceremonies and spiritual themes.

One feature of the last scene, so far either overlooked or misinterpreted in the literature, provides a convenient starting point for unraveling the puzzle of Avery's "misplaced" image. These are the four, small pitchers that are conspicuously placed on the two-stepped base of the enormous font. G. Cavallo, citing P. Toesca, mentions them in passing and describes them as painted with "lion masks, daggers and foliate decoration" and, like Toesca, assumes that they reflect contemporary orientalizing potteryware.²⁰ But the pitchers are more than neo-Byzantine footnotes to the image and bring into sharper focus the ideological framework of the roll.

Formally, the pitchers are wide-mouthed vessels with a single, curved handle and are uniformly colored a deep amber hue. They are patently transparent, as the black ink line that defines the back of the platform can easily be seen as it cuts through the vessels at approximate mid-section.

These pitchers are not remarkable in a liturgical setting. Braun discusses the type in the *vasa non sacra* group of liturgical vessels variously termed *urceus* or *acquamanile*; with the chalice and paten (*vasa sacra*), they are the responsibility of the subdeacon.²¹ For example, the subdeacon in the ninth-century Raganaldus Sacramentary holds a chalice in one hand and a pitcher in the other.²² In the Casanatense Pontifical, the bishop gives the

chalice and paten to subdeacons, and archdeacons confer the more humble pitcher, basin, and towel.²³ Such pitchers normally function as cleansing agents for the celebrant's hands, and a rare, early scene of this common ritual has been preserved in the "Grotto of the Original Sin" on the outskirts of Matera.²⁴ A somewhat more ambiguous use of the pitcher can be found on the front of the ninth-century book cover of the Drogo Sacramentary where the central carving in the lowest register corresponds to the illustration in the Bari roll (Fig. 5).²⁵ Two ecclesiastics flank the font; the cleric on the left carries the bucket-shaped *situla*, and the cleric on the right grasps the paschal candle with both hands. A layman, squeezed into the right frame, holds out a pitcher which appears under the forearm of the candle-bearing deacon.

Unlike the examples cited, the Bari pitchers seem strangely isolated. All other participants in the consecration ceremony are fully occupied. The bishop holds a crozier as he blesses the font, and the three clerics behind him carry the jeweled codex, processional cross, and flask of chrism. The deacon who faces the bishop across the font uses both hands as he lowers the candle into the font, and his compatriot turns to the laity to receive the first infant to be baptized.

The illustration of baptism in the Warmund Sacramentary, executed for the Cathedral of Ivrea at the turn of the eleventh century, may have a bearing on this problem (Fig. 6).²⁶ Although the bishop does not seem to be present, and the only recognizable liturgical object is the flask of chrism held by the deacon at the far left, three vessels appear between the heads at the top of the composition. Supported by no one and ignored by all, the shape of these vessels may provide a clue to one of the sources of the Bari pitchers. They are full-bodied vessels with elongated necks to which double handles are attached. Although stunted by compositional compression, the Warmund pitchers are clearly amphorae, which are the vessels

¹⁹H. Belting, "Byzantine Art among Greeks and Latins in Southern Italy," *DÖP* 28 (1974), 19, has proposed an iconographic source for the Procession in illustrations of the Crossing of the Red Sea which is perfectly plausible. The journey of the Israelites is cited in the fourth prophecy (with the Canticle of Moses tract), the tenth prophecy, and in the Old Testament exemplars of the baptismal liturgy, in addition to the benediction of the new light.

²⁰Cavallo, *Rotuli*, 83; P. Toesca, *Storia dell'arte italiana*. I. *Il medioevo*, II (Turin, 1927), 1109 note 22.

²¹J. Braun, *Das christliche Altergerät* (Munich, 1930), 531–51.

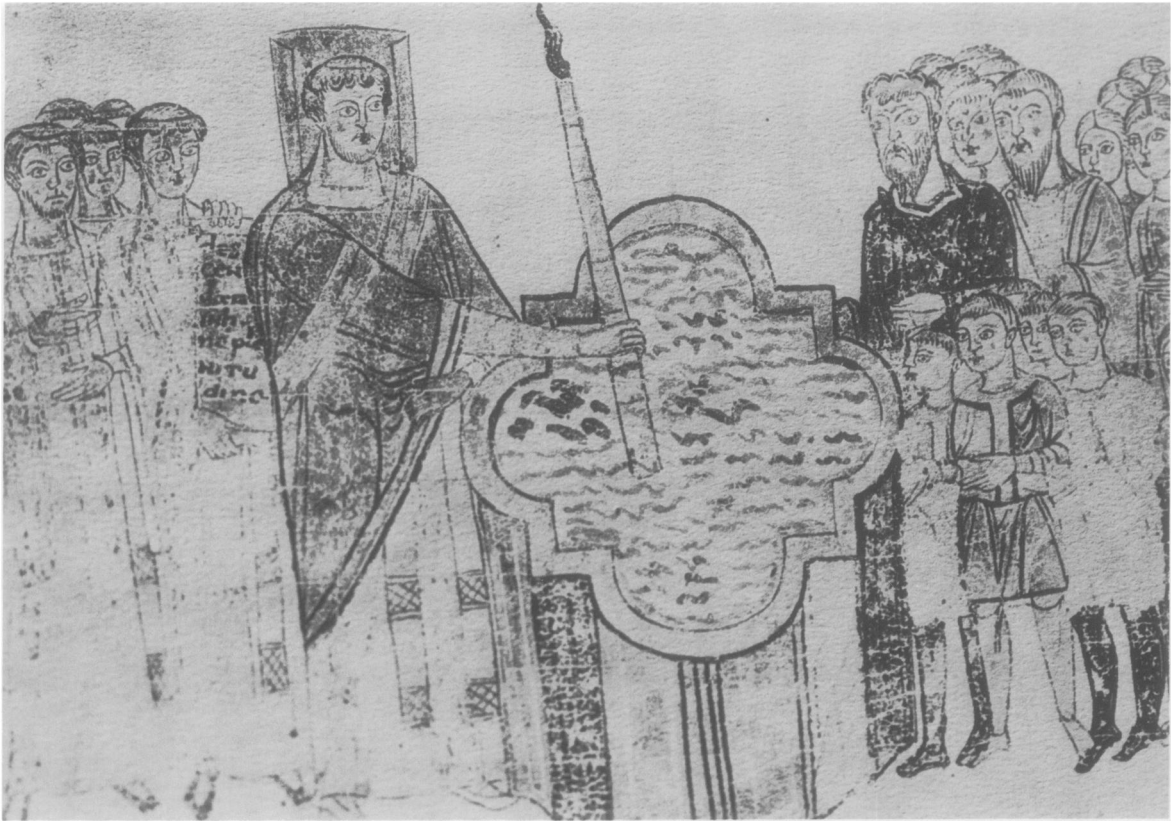
²²W. Koehler, *Die karolingischen Miniaturen*, I (Berlin, 1930), 245–50; 393–96, pl. I, 61; see also R. E. Reynolds, "The Portrait of the Ecclesiastical Officers in the Raganaldus Sacramentary and Its Liturgico-Canonical Significance," *Speculum* 46 (1971), 432–42.

²³Belting, *Malerei*, 148, figs. 184, 185 with the rubrics for the *urceus* given to the acolyte and *urceum cum aquimile* to the subdeacons.

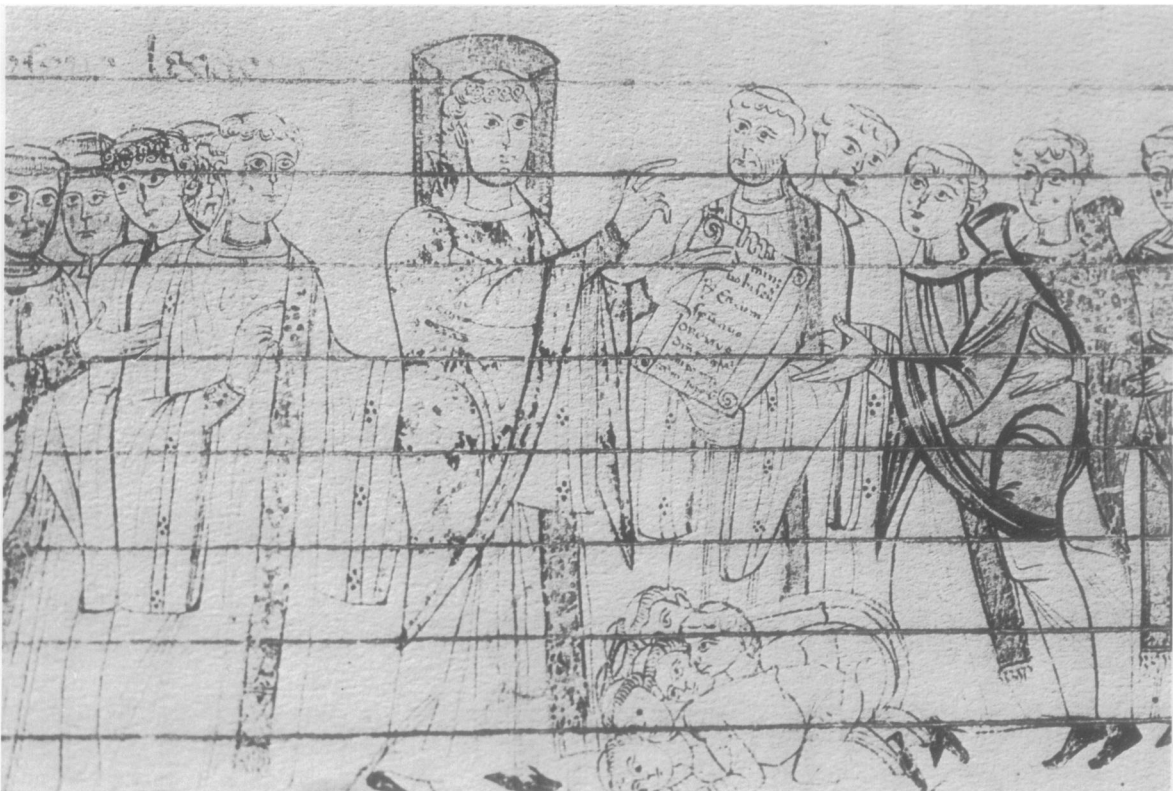
²⁴V. Pace, "La pittura delle origini in Puglia (sec. IX–XIV)," in *La Puglia fra Bisanzio e l'occidente* (Milan, 1980), 317, fig. 424.

²⁵A. Goldschmidt, *Die Elfenbeinskulpturen aus der Zeit der karolingischen und sächsischen Kaiser, VIII–IX* (Berlin, 1914), 41, pl. 30, no. 74a. Goldschmidt defines the *situla* as the container of chrism, but this is unlikely. The same vessel appears in the far right section of the middle register where it is used to consecrate a church.

²⁶L. Magnani, *Le miniature del sacramentario d'Ivrea e di altri codici Warmundiani* (Vatican City, 1934), 29, does not mention the vessels.



1. Rome, Bibl. Casanatense, Cod. 724 (B I 13) II. *Benedictio Fontis*, consecration of the font



2. Rome, Bibl. Casanatense, Cod. 724 (B I 13) I. Pontifical, ordination of doorkeepers: benediction



3. Bari, Cathedral Archives. Benedictional, deesis and procession



4. Bari, Cathedral Archives. Benedictional, consecration of the font and V initial Christ



5. Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, MS lat. 9428. Ivory cover of the Drogo Sacramentary. Detail, consecration of the font (after A. Goldschmidt, *Die Elfenbeinskulpturen aus der Zeit der karolingischen und sächsischen Kaiser, VIII–IX* [Berlin, 1914] , pl. xxx, 74a)



6. Ivrea, Bibl. Capitolare, MS 86, fol. 61v. Warmund Sacramentary, baptism (after L. Magnani, *Le miniature del sacramentario d'Ivrea* [Vatican City, 1934] , pl. xvii)



7. Bari, Cathedral Archives. *Exultet I*, liturgical ceremony and V initial Christ



8. Bari, Cathedral Archives. *Exultet* I, papal and imperial portraits

born by the waterpourers in representations of the Miracle at Cana from the fifth century onward.²⁷ These same amphorae recur in the depiction of the Miracle at Cana in the Casanatense Benedictional which illustrates the first exemplar of Christ's godhead in the consecration formulas, as the bishop, for the second time, symbolically divides the waters of the font into four parts.

It is probable that the pitchers of the Warmund Sacramentary, that of the Drogo Sacramentary cover, and, at least on one level, the Bari pitchers were not destined for the simple ritual of cleansing the celebrant's hands. They were instead vehicles for the transport of the spiritualized waters of the font, part of which were distributed by the bishop prior to baptism.²⁸ Suitably transformed, such waters were used to consecrate churches, bless houses, succor the ill, and asperge fields and vineyards to insure a prosperous yield.²⁹ Like the four rivers of Paradise, cited in the liturgy prior to the Miracle at Cana, these waters flow in four directions and nourish the whole world.

A second feature of the Bari pitchers, however, distinguishes them from all other *vasa non sacra* known to this author. They are not merely ornamental as has been assumed, for each vessel bears a single device. From left to right, the pitchers nearest the font are marked with the keys of Peter and the sword of Paul; those below display the lion of Mark and the ox of Luke. No foliate decoration detracts from these symbols.

A long tradition stands behind the association in the Benedictional between Peter and Mark, Paul and Luke in both the West and the East. As neither evangelist was a disciple of Christ, the authority of their gospels, according to Jerome's Prologue, *Plures fuisse*—a standard component of Latin Gospel books—depends on their respective relationships as followers of Peter and Paul.³⁰ In the East the same pairing ultimately derives from the Prefaces of Irenaeus.³¹ It is not unimportant in the

context of the Bari illustration that the Gospel Prefaces note that Mark, baptized by Peter, became the first bishop of Alexandria and stress the sacerdotal nature of Luke.

Pictorial sources are more difficult to determine. The pairing of these apostles and evangelists in western art is sporadic at best, and only one manuscript, the late Carolingian Gospels in Prague, clearly illustrates the relationship.³² Conversely, a much stronger tradition for the pairing exists in Greek Gospel books, as R. S. Nelson has recently demonstrated.³³ That Greek liturgical books were readily available in Bari is well documented, and, given the pronounced Byzantine character of the illustrations in the Benedictional, it is tempting to suggest that the emblematic pitchers also derived from a local, Greek source.³⁴ As such materials vanished from Bari after the Norman conquest of the city in 1071 and the devices on the vessels are meagre, it is more profitable to examine the preserved context in which these pitchers appear, for they seem to reflect a particular facet of ecclesiastical ideology in Bari in the eleventh century. This is expressed in the *Vere dignum* Christ and the border medallions.

The vertical borders of the Bari rolls are unique in that they are not merely decorative, but are representational. Unfortunately, these borders have been mistreated with alarming frequency throughout the literature. On the one hand, the Greek inscriptions that accompany thirty-six of the forty-eight portrait medallions of the Cathedral *Exultet* and its preponderance of eastern saints have been used as a cudgel in arguments for the Byzantine complexion (and possible Greek execution) of the work. On the other hand, a bizarre methodological approach that divorces decoration from illustration has led to the practice of simply listing the named saints in the *Exultet* (usually from beginning to end, first on the left and then on the right).³⁵ As a result, the border medallions are never regarded as meaningful groups or related to the illustrations they flank.

Elsewhere, in connection with the iconographic

²⁷ W. F. Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten der Spätantike und des frühen Mittelalters*, 3rd ed. (Mainz, 1976), figs. 112, 119, 233.

²⁸ M. Andrieu, *Les Ordines Romani du haut moyen âge*. II. *Les textes* (Louvain, 1960), 445, no. 95.

²⁹ Franz, *Benediktionen*, 50 ff.

³⁰ D. de Bruyne, *Les préfaces de la Bible latine* (Namur, 1920), 155 f; PL 26, cols. 15 ff; F. Babudri, "L'Exultet di Bari del sec. XI," *ASIPugl* 10 (1957), 126, did identify the devices but did not recognize their connection to the apostles and evangelists. The four evangelist symbols are cited in various early Missals at the instruction of the candidates, but no mention of Peter and Paul is made. See E. C. Whitaker, *Documents of the Baptismal Liturgy* (London, 1960), 163 f, 190, 195 f.

³¹ R. S. Nelson, *The Iconography of Preface and Miniature in the Byzantine Gospel Book* (New York, 1980), 9–10, with previous literature.

³² P. Bloch and H. Schnitzler, *Die ottonische kölnner Malerschule*, II (Düsseldorf, 1970), 113–15, figs. 411, 425, with full bibliography.

³³ Nelson, *Gospel Book*, 76–82, figs. 48–51, 54–58, 60–61.

³⁴ For example, see *CDB*, no. 18, 31 f.

³⁵ Babudri, "Exultet," 128 ff; Cavallo, *Rotuli*, 52 f. F. Volbach, "Exultet I," in *Alle sorgenti del Romanico. Puglia, XI secolo*, ed. P. Belli d'Elia (Bari, 1975), 113, missed six of the apostles because of this method. The reproduction of the *Vere dignum* Christs of the *Exultet* and Benedictional as in Belting, "Byzantine Art," figs. 19, 20, with borders cropped only aggravates the problem.

program of the Cathedral *Exultet*, I have examined this problem in detail, and as the Benedictional drew upon the *Exultet* for its vertical borders, a brief summary of my earlier conclusions may be presented here.³⁶ The forty-eight portrait medallions of the *Exultet* are equally divided into four major iconographic groups which are arranged in an absolute hierarchy and govern the illustrations they frame. The first set of uninscribed medallions are the victims of a murderous restoration. Before the addition of misshapen palliums, scraggly beards, pincushion tonsured pates and a sickly violet wash which obliterated numerous wings, these medallions contained a uniform set of angels aligned on either side of the wholly celestial frontispiece. The second group is apostolic and includes the four evangelists; they flank the illustration of the rejuvenated earth, the liturgical ceremony, and the *Vere dignum* Christ. The third set is headed by John and Zacharias who flank the Anastasis, and includes the four fathers of the eastern church, posed at the corners of the Wind Rota, and three pairs of bishops presiding over the harvesting of the bees. In the last group, six eastern military saints guard the ecclesiastical and secular portraits, while the remaining medallions, which contain hermetic and female saints, accompany the unillustrated text to its end.

A glance at the Benedictional reveals that all border medallions depict high ecclesiastics seen in the three-quarter view reserved in the *Exultet* for the apostolic group. The restorations of the Benedictional's portrait medallions, some medieval and others of very recent date, is too complicated an issue to be considered here, but in one instance the decision to adopt the apostolic view was critical.³⁷ The two portrait medallions that flank the head of the *Vere dignum* Christ still retain the well-known features of Peter and Paul, the same two apostles linked to the *Vere dignum* Christ of the *Exultet* (Fig. 7).

The parallels between the *Vere dignum* illustrations in the *Exultet* and the Benedictional could hardly be more forceful. In both cases Christ is didactic, firmly seated on a substantial throne, and contrasts with the otherworldly Christ of the *Exul-*

tet frontispiece and the Benedictional's Deesis. Both are flanked in the border medallions by Peter and Paul in an obvious reference to the *traditio legis* theme. In both manuscripts this triad presides over the illustration of a liturgical ceremony in which the bishop officiates and the archdeacon performs.

The unusual Bari pitchers thus constitute a hierarchy within a hierarchy. An unbroken line of succession is established from Christ to Peter and Paul, and from them, to Mark and Luke. The vessels at the feet of the bishop establish his episcopal authority through the Sees of Rome and Alexandria; those at the feet of the archdeacon underscore the sacerdotal function he performs. From their humble origins, the Bari pitchers have become *vasa sacra*; like the four rivers of Paradise of Jerome's *Plures fuisse* and the text of the consecration rite, the four pitchers spread the waters of the font far from its point of origin and they do so with christological, apostolic, evangelical, and episcopal authority.³⁸

The motivation for linking ecclesiastical authority to the *traditio legis* theme can be traced to the history of ecclesiastical politics in Bari. Briefly stated, when the combined theme of Longobardia, Lucania, and Calabria was established in 969, Bari became its administrative capital and the seat of the catepan, the provincial governor, of all territories possessed by Constantinople in southern Italy.³⁹ The majority of the city's inhabitants were Latin, and attempts to hellenize the clergy were notably unsuccessful.⁴⁰ Two revolts against the incumbent Greeks in the early eleventh century were aborted, but it is clear that Constantinople placed a high priority on stability in the city for economic and political reasons. One method of insuring Bari loyalty to Byzantium was effected by the enhancement of the local clergy.

By 1024 Bari had claimed archiepiscopal rights for over a century, and while these had been recognized by Constantinople, they had never been legalized by Rome. In 1024–25 this situation

³⁶ P. Mayo, "Borders in Bari: The Decorative Program of Bari I and Montecassino under Desiderius," *Miscellanea Cassinese* 48 (1984), 1–27.

³⁷ All of the palliums were added to the basic figure drawing. The range of additions can be seen between the first two preserved medallions, where the palliums follow the lines of mantles, and the penultimate on the left, which was turned frontally in the 1953 restoration. Compare Avery, *Exultet Rolls*, pl. xvi and Cavallo, *Rotuli*, pl. 171.

³⁸ The reference to the four rivers of Paradise occurs in the Old Testament exemplars: "Qui te de fonte paradisi manare, et in quattuor fluminibus totam terram rigare precepit." The bishop divides the waters of the font into four parts for the first time in the ceremony. For the Lateran Baptistry and the fountain of life theme, P. Underwood, "The Fountain of Life in Manuscripts of the Gospels," *DOP* 5 (1950), 43–138, esp. 43–60.

³⁹ A. Guillou, "La Puglia e Bisanzio," in *La Puglia fra Bisanzio e l'occidente* (Milan, 1980), 6.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 9; V. von Falkenhausen, *Untersuchungen über die byzantinische Herrschaft in Süditalien vom 9. bis 11. Jahrhundert* (Wiesbaden, 1967).

changed radically; under obvious pressure from Constantinople, the new pope, John XIX, consecrated Bizantium as archbishop and, in a second bull, renewed these rights and placed a vast diocesan territory under Bari jurisdiction.⁴¹

The bulls of John XIX have always been recognized as a major event in Bari history. These papal confirmations gave Bizantium and his successors, Nicolaus (1036–61) and Andreas (1061–78), a prestige not only in the eyes of Rome and Constantinople but also locally.⁴² The bishoprics of Trani, Siponto, Taranto, and Otranto, for example, were powerful forces with which Bari had to contend, and it is also known that Canosa, the ancient seat of the Bari bishopric, did not readily succumb to a subordinate position.⁴³ Until the Norman conquest, the pro-Byzantine aristocratic clergy of Bari pursued their elevated status with some notable undertakings. An entirely new cathedral was begun under Bizantium and may have been substantially completed by Nicolaus.⁴⁴ The latter, according to a recent study published in these papers, was also responsible for rebuilding the cathedral of Canosa as a deliberate reflection of Constantinople's Holy Apostles.⁴⁵ Major works were produced in the field of sculpture; in manuscript production, the Bari variant of the Beneventan script developed to maturity, and both the Cathedral *Exultet* and the Benedictional were created.⁴⁶

The relationship between the *Exultet* and the Benedictional reflects this development and a shift

in climate. At the time of Bizantium's consecration, the cathedral population was housed in an antiquated structure, and there is no evidence that any Latin churches were built or remodeled prior to this time. Conversely, in Bari alone, the Greek catepans had built extensively. For example, Basil Mesardonites Argyros (1010–17) carried out a major rebuilding campaign in the *curtes imperiales* which included not only the praetorium, the fiscal department, and the residence of the catepan but also a vestibule (possibly modeled on the Chalke Gate) and a new church, dedicated to St. Demetrius, which must have been the most modern and impressive structure in Bari in 1025.⁴⁷ There is no reason to assume that the Bari clergy were unaware of the existence of the earlier rolls of Benevento and the prestige they conferred upon the rank of archbishop; certainly, the systematic display of liturgical rolls and Gospel lectionaries in the services of local Greek churches could not have escaped their attention. The *Exultet* roll, as I continue to maintain, was the Latin response to this atmosphere when Bizantium was officially elevated in rank.⁴⁸

The *Exultet* roll has all the hallmarks of a truly clever piece of work produced by the bright student. The chant of the *Exultet* hymn provides in the Latin church a unique opportunity for display which has no precise equivalent in the Easter liturgy of the Greek church. When the roll was designed, unlike its Beneventan predecessor, the illustrations were inverted and were clearly meant to be seen. Proof of intentional visibility rests in part on the same criteria of wide and short dimensions (39 × 530 cm) and the reduction of its pictorial cycle to less than half the number of illustrations in the Beneventan manuscript. But there is a second and more important clue to the intentions of its designers. Contrary to its own internal principles of immediate association between the appropriate text and illustration, the artist of this Bari roll advanced the papal and imperial portraits into the eulogy of the bees, a full six verses prior to the commemorations that these portraits illustrate (Fig. 8). Thus, the two portraits form a visual diptych; they are closely positioned, internally linked by a whole array of blatant compositional and icon-

⁴¹J. Gay, *L'Italie méridionale et l'empire byzantin depuis l'avènement de Basile Ier jusqu'à la prise de Bari par les Normands (867–1071)* (Paris, 1904), 426. W. Holtzmann, *Italia pontificia, sive repertorium privilegiorum et litterarum a romanis pontificibus ante annum MCLXXXVIII, Samnium, Apulia, Lucania*, vol. IX in *Regesta Pontificum Romanorum*, ed. P. F. Kehr (Berlin, 1962) (hereafter Kehr, *Ital. Pont.*), 317, nos. 1, 2.

⁴²Kehr, *Ital. Pont.*, 318 f, nos. 3, 4, 5.

⁴³For Greek support of Bari over these centers, V. von Falkenhausen, *Herrschaft*, 151 ff; Kehr, *Ital. Pont.*, 315. The Bari clergy claimed the combined title of Bari-Canosa as early as 845, and their position was strengthened by the catepan, Gregorios Tarchaneiotis, in the 990s.

⁴⁴P. Belli D'Elia and C. Bucci in *Puglia, XI secolo*, 99 ff, 325, give the most recent arguments on the chronology of the cathedral. On churches built in Bari, B. M. Apollonj Ghatti, *Bari vecchia* (Bari, 1972), 224 ff, gives documentation for churches built in the period.

⁴⁵A. W. Epstein, "The Date and Significance of the Cathedral of Canosa in Apulia, South Italy," *DOP* 37 (1983), 79–90.

⁴⁶Belli D'Elia, in *Puglia, XI secolo*, 80 ff, 110 ff for Acceptus, the Canosa ambo, and fragments of the Bari ambo. Apollonj Ghatti, *Bari vecchia*, 184, gives the evidence for Nicolaus' marble ciborium for the main altar of the cathedral and its inscription; A. Beatillo, *Historia di Bari, principale città della Puglia nel Regno di Napoli* (Naples, 1637), 53. On the development of the Bari script in the cathedral documents, G. Cavallo, "Struttura e articolazione delle minuscole beneventana libraria tra i secoli X–XII," *SM*, ser. 3, 11 (1970), 343–68.

⁴⁷A. Guillou, "Un document sur le gouvernement de la province: L'inscription historique en vers de Bari (1011)," in *Studies in Byzantine Italy* (London, 1970), VIII, 1–22. The carved, metric inscription is in the museum in the gallery of S. Nicolo which replaced the structures of the catepanate.

⁴⁸Cavallo, *Rotuli*, 50 f, for a date in the late 1020s; Belting, "Byzantine Art," 15, for a date in the thirties or forties of the century.

ographic devices, and share the same spiritual guardians in the border medallions: the six Greek military saints. A more persuasive statement of the balance of power between local ecclesiastical and secular authorities is difficult to imagine. When the roll was displayed to the Latin congregation, the Bari clergy could have felt justifiable pride in their accomplishment. Composed of a few, relatively large, spare images and containing in the border medallions an entire hierarchic scheme based on Middle Byzantine monumental church decoration, the roll evinces a level of sophistication in direct competition with the artistic preferences of the ruling Greek administrators.

By mid-eleventh century, when Nicolaus commissioned the Benedictional to accompany the *Exultet*, the compulsion to prove Latin acquaintance with Byzantine taste had evaporated. Nicolaus visited Constantinople, and the more fluent Greek idiom of the illustrations suggests an easy familiarity with eastern art.⁴⁹ It does not follow, however, that Bari had abandoned the tenacity of its hold on Latin ecclesiastical authority. In fact, the process of upgrading the prestige of the archbishopric seems to have progressively increased.⁵⁰

In their scrutiny of the *Exultet* roll, the designers of the Benedictional must have been as struck by the Greek lineage of the saints as modern scholars have been. Whereas angels and apostles defy territorial limitation, the inclusion of the four eastern fathers around the Wind Rota to the exclusion of their western counterparts, and the absence of familiar local saints in favor of those from Byzantine provinces, must have seemed unnecessarily one-sided. The Virgin, although regularly featured in *Exultet* roll illustration and to whom the cathedral of Bari was dedicated, had been omitted. The local archbishop had been clumsily inserted into the liturgical scene and lacked a certain panache. Therefore, the designers of the Benedictional followed two procedures when they prepared their

manuscript; they accepted those aspects of their immediate model that could be turned to their advantage and modified its ideological framework to emphasize the prestige of the local clergy.

In general, the *Exultet* roll provided the basic format of selective illustration and representational borders. More specifically, the designers of the Benedictional seized on three particular features of the earlier work. First, they accepted the precedent of advancing an illustration out of context. This insured that, in the Consecration of the Font, the archbishop would be visible to the congregation at the most impressive point in the ceremony: the transformation of the waters through divine intervention. Second, they adopted both the enthroned Christ and the portraits of Peter and Paul in the borders for the *Vere dignum* initial and so perpetuated the *traditio legis* theme. Third, they looked to the apostolic section of the *Exultet* borders and made the more unusual, three-quarter view canonical in the twenty-four medallions of the Benedictional's borders.

The designers' modifications were more numerous. First, the new roll was prepared not simply to extend the *Exultet* but to envelope it, as the initial texts indicate. This enabled them to include the Virgin in the Deesis attached to the benedictions that precede the *Exultet* chant. Second, the illustration of the liturgical ceremony was fused with the triad of the *Vere dignum* initial without any intervening text. Third, the vessels in the consecration scene were endowed with liturgical associations. The font departs from the more archeologically sound lobed font and strongly resembles a large, decorated chalice.⁵¹ The four symbolic pitchers also balanced the presence of the eastern fathers of the Wind Rota. In the *Exultet*, the life-giving breath of the Creator is transmitted universally through eastern authority; in the Benedictional, the breath of the Holy Spirit travels with apostolic and evangelical support.⁵² Fourth, the dignity of the archbishop was effectively enhanced. Few viewers of the roll could miss the a-b-b-a syncopation of Christ, archbishop, archbishop, Christ in the pictorial sequence. Finally, the border medallions favor the apostolic and ecclesiastical spheres. The history of the only identified saint, Maurus of Bisceglie, is too convoluted to be considered here, but

⁴⁹ V. von Falkenhausen, *La dominazione bizantina nell'Italia meridionale dal IX all'XI secolo* (Bari, 1978), 171 f; V. Laurent, *Le corpus des sceaux* (Paris, 1963–72), 732. Nicolaus was in Constantinople in 1042 and again, with Argyros, in 1055. For the activities of Argyros, A. Guillou, "Production and Profits in the Byzantine Province of Italy (Tenth to Eleventh Centuries): An Expanding Society," *DOP* 28 (1974), 98 ff, 108 f.

⁵⁰ Kehr, *Ital. Pont.*, 318 f, on the forged bulls of Andreas and pretensions of territories not subject to Bari. Andreas was also responsible for the numerous additions to the commemorations within the text of the *Exultet*, and Ursus (1080–89) inserted above the commemorative verses an exceptionally self-congratulatory "una cum venerabili archi(episc)opo n(ost)ro domno Ursone"(!). See Cavallo, *Rotuli*, 48.

⁵¹ The lobed font is used throughout the Casanatense Benedictional.

⁵² The rubrics for the second epiclesis in the Benedictional read: "Hic mitte cereum in fontem. et insuffla in aquam tribus vicibus. et hoc dic de cantico."

his association with Peter and his designation as "protomartyr" lend him a venerability that even Sabinus of Canosa could not claim.⁵³

Metaphorically, the distance between the *Exultet* roll and the Benedictional approximates that between the eager student and older scholar. The *Exultet* is almost gratuitously Byzantine in thinking, and the Latin population of Bari was left out of the equation when the depiction of Ecclesia, standard in *Exultet* roll illustration, was suppressed.⁵⁴ However Byzantine in style, the Benedictional radiates a confidence in itself and its flock, which by this time included the Bari-born catepan, Argyros.⁵⁵

⁵³ For the tradition that Maurus returned with Peter from Corinth and was made the first bishop of Bari by the apostle, M. Garruba, *Serie critica de' sacri pastori baresi* (Bari, 1844), 14 f; Apollonj Ghetti, *Bari vecchia*, 30 f, reviews the legend and connects this Maurus with one of the churches in the catepanate destroyed when St. Nicholas was built.

⁵⁴ It is interesting that Bari 2 (Cavallo, *Rotuli*, pls. 20, 21), executed in the third quarter of the 11th century, includes a crowd of the faithful in both of its illustrations of the liturgical ceremony. The four people grouped behind the baldachin in Bari 1 are relatively modern additions.

⁵⁵ Guillou, "Production" (as above, note 49); Nicolaus and Argyros were both essential to East-West negotiations. The entry on the reverse of the *Exultet*, reproduced in Cavallo (*Rotuli*, 49), reads: "memorare, d(om)ine, famule tue imperatricis nostre Theodore et cunctorum exercituum eius quam et senioris nostri Argiro benignissimi magistri et omnium circumstantium."

Lay and clerical, from suckling infant to proud parent, a cross section of the native Bari population appears in the Procession and Consecration of the Font. The archbishop is a living presence and not the stony, nimbed symbol of his office which informs the *Exultet* roll. In the baptistry, the joyous multitude that had spilled out of the cathedral after celebrating Christ's resurrection could see themselves as the archbishop prayed:

Look, O Lord, on the face of thy Church, and multiply in her thy regenerations, who by the streams of thy abundant grace fillest thy city with joy. . . .⁵⁶

For these people, the ceremonies in the baptistry did not offer only the singular experience of preserving the souls of their offspring. Through the four small pitchers about the font, they could reap the more immediate benefits of Christ's benevolence for home and kin, crops and vines, the city and its Latin churches.

State University of New York,
Binghamton

⁵⁶ For the inscription that depends on this verse, inscribed on the epistyle of the elaborate font in the Lateran Baptistry constructed under Sixtus III, P. Underwood, "Fountain of Life," 59 (a).